



ICHLA Education Committee Meeting Minutes
IGCS-Foyer 2 West
Wednesday, July 26, 2006 2:30pm

Committee Members:

Frances Vega, Commissioner
Adolfo Solis, Commissioner
Maria Dalhoumi, School City of East Chicago ESL
Ellen Krulewitch, Elkhart Community Schools ENL
Erika Chairez, Univisión

ICHLA Staff Members:

Laura Barrett, Education Researcher
Ryan Marques, Business/Economic Development Researcher

I. Welcome, Introductions

A. Review and Discussion of Remaining Member Assignments

Laura Barrett opened the Education Committee discussion with introductions from new and current committee members.

Adolfo Solis introduced himself as an ICHLA Commissioner and a Ball State University student. He also works with a non-for-profit organization called CASA de Portland (Community Affairs and Spanish Assistance); they promote ESL classes, teach Spanish and provide social services such as healthcare. This organization has been active for the past two years. He expressed his enthusiasm in participating with the Education Committee.

Erika Chairez introduced herself as an Account Executive for Univision. She is an advocate for Latinos and higher education. She has interests in assisting the Education Committee.

Kathryn Lee introduced herself as the Education Specialist for the Indiana Civil Rights Commission. She reassured Committee members that the Civil Rights Commission views education as their main priority.

II. Current Issues, Committee Assignments

Laura Barrett briefly summarized the Committee Assignments discussed at the previous Education Committee meeting.

- Christine Cde Baca- Arrupe Jesuit High School program model (modeled off of Chicago program)-promote business education students
- Maria Dalhoumi- Parent University & etc. E. Chicago program models; Everyday Math, Free For Me- Would like to make them statewide program

- Ellen Krulewitch- ISTAR requirements/issues-It is the monitoring program that is the alternative assessment for students that have not been enrolled in U.S. schools for three consecutive years. 3rd through 12 grades complete the ISTEP process. Elkhart Schools do count Kindergarten 1 & 2 so students are permitted to take ISTEP in 3rd grade. If a student meets LEP level 5, complete grade level grades and pass GQE then they can take ISTEP.

Kathryn Lee discussed a new statute about cultural competence. Christine Cde Baca and Kathryn have met with the Department of Education and discussed how the ISTEP is not a culturally competent test. This statute was recently passed in March 2006

Laura Barrett suggested that the ISTEP's lack of cultural competence be included as a Committee recommendation.

Ellen Krulewitch explained that the Federal Government views ISTAR as lacking difficulty, however, the test is also not culturally competent.

- Marilee Updike- Explained best learning techniques; best one is the Two-Way Developmental Bilingual Education. She focused on limiting vocabulary memorization and focusing on comprehension. Both the language teacher and the language teacher must administer the ISTAR evaluation. Problems with ISTAR; counts as ISTEP failure.

Ellen Krulewitch explained that ISTAR is not an exam, yet an evaluation over time. It is administered once a year; based upon where that student is at that point in time. The following year, ISTAR is administered again. The math teachers are required to complete the test, yet some ENL teacher must oversee testing at times. She discussed the LAS Links measure; it is an Indiana measure that would replace the Woodcock Munoz test and etc. mechanisms that test the LEP levels. LAS Links is the Language Arts portion of determining the students' LEP level (levels 1-5).

France Vega and Adolfo Solis requested copies of the materials discussed at the last Committee meeting.

Kathryn Lee promised to provide a copy of the most recent statute regarding cultural competency.

A. Alternative Assessments/Home Literacy/Multicultural Literacy Issues

Kathryn Lee explained and provided committee members with a summary of the Civil Rights education initiative. She also provided copies of the Educational Programs Statute. This initiative includes similar statute details of the Indiana Civil Rights Commission. She discussed how the Civil Rights Commission was called to work with the Indiana Department of Education, universities within the state and beyond to focus on education. The Civil Rights Commission's initial

focus is to look at K-12 disparities involved with the discipline in the school. i.e. race, color, disabilities and etc. This is their first area of emphasis. They have formulated and recently presented a resolution to the Civil Rights Commission to formulate an Education Steering Committee. They have already begun asking various members to participate. Amy Mendoza was already asked to sit on the Steering Committee. This Committee includes approximately 7 members from the Department of Education, several Indiana Representatives, Indiana Senators, Superintendents and Dr. Russ Skiva from IU. The first meeting will be held September 12, 2006. A presentation will be given from the Programs for Opportunity with the University of Michigan, presentation from Russ Skiva and Steering Committee participation. This is a proposed group and is not yet official; some member participation has yet to be confirmed.

Frances Vega suggested that the Civil Rights Commission also include community college systems with this Steering Committee; they have the highest Latino population enrollment. This will be a large concern if this population is not included.

Kathryn agreed to include community college involvement with the Steering Committee.

Adolfo Solis said that his “first chance of success” was completing the GED requirements. He expressed his gratitude for those that assisted him through college; i.e. IVY Tech. Adolfo Solis arrived in the U.S. 12 years ago. He explained how Mexico does not offer government (education) loans/grants information. Adolfo Solis suggested that the Education Committee review these cultural disparities. Ball State University currently has many programs that target Hispanic parents. Delaware County lacks parent-to-school college information.

Frances Vega provided information on her assignment, which was to make contact with high school counselors and provide drop-out statistics. She explained how high school counselors are not ignoring the Hispanic population deliberately. Frances Vega received an invitation to attend a conference for high school counselors (statewide counselors). She requested to be put on the conference agenda as a speaker/presenter. Frances Vega plans to talk to counselors (especially freshman counselors) about the imperativeness to explain to the students the difference of scholarships and college goals if a student graduates with a high school diploma as opposed to an academic diploma. She will ask these counselors to explain this important difference to the parents and the children. Frances Vega stated that many parents are not aware that their children (across the board) have certain high school requirements that they must meet before they can pursue a specific college degree. She discussed the Mapping Education Towards College Achievement (META) post-secondary education workshop that will take place on Friday, October 6, 2006 at IUPUI. This organization brings together 300+ Latino high school students each year from all over central Indiana. The Mexican Consulate explains to students how a

U.S. education will help those who plan to return to Mexico. They also provide etc. guest speakers of Latinos who have actually succeeded with higher education; representatives include Eli Lilly, the media, etc. These organizations explain what type of education is required to become a desired profession. Unfortunately, Frances Vega stated that the majority of students who attend these workshops are seniors. Indiana is one of the 4 states in the U.S. that provides the CORE 40 program. She explained how Indiana ranked in the top 5 states for college preparatory but is not at 80%.

Kathryn Lee explained how the problem lies within the methodologies of the state; Indiana is at least 20 years behind. She emphasized how CORE 40 and etc. classes are not teaching students the way they actually learn. She agreed that the Indiana Department of Education is “on the right track” to developing sufficient programs; they are developing programs that the State of Washington began 20 years ago.

Frances Vega explained that private schools are also not where they need to be. She suggested that the Education Committee research what college preparatory programs are offered beginning in the middle schools. She also mentioned the program Project Stepping Stone offered through the National Society of Hispanic MBA’s (NSHMBA). Frances Vega insisted that schools inform the parents/students early on about the necessary college requirements.

Kathryn agreed that parents and educators must be there for the students, especially during the early transition stages.

Adolfo asked if programs were already implemented at the early stages. Students would become more aware of college/university requirements.

Erika Chairez informed the committee that she was self-motivated and had supportive migrant worker parents. She knew of other Latino friends who did not have supportive parents, college goals/aspirations. Erika Chairez described her experience when she visited Indiana University for the first time. She said that she was inspired to go to college.

Frances Vega reiterated the importance of exposing students to colleges/universities prior to high school. She explained a non-for-profit organization called Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF). MALDEF’s mission is to protect and promote the civil rights of over 40 million Latinos working and residing in the United States. This organization works to ensure that there are no artificial barriers or unfair obstacles preventing the Latino community of achieving their dreams. They focus on education and provide a map of trained MALDEF leaders; Indiana is not included. Frances Vega would like the Civil Rights Commission to review this information from the conference and embrace it. She promised to provide copies of this information to all committee members.

Frances Vega explained the Educational Pipeline hand-out that she received from the NALEO Conference. She said “this pipeline is scary.” It reflects that by the year 2050, the Latino population will increase by 115%, the African-American population will increase between 70%-75% and the White/Anglo population will increase by 40%. She said, “It is well-known that the White/Anglo population is the best educated population in the U.S.” She also commented, “If the educational system continues the way it’s going, by the year 2050, we will be close to being considered a third-world country, because no one will be in the middle class; they cannot make money because they lack education.” Our committee must help make people aware of these statistics. Frances Vega said, “If every state takes on this initiative, it should not occur.”

Frances Vega discussed the Education Excellence for Hispanic Americans information that she also received from the NALEO Conference. White House speaker, Sarita Brown, provided extensive education information at the Conference. Sarita Brown provided workshop attendees with hand-outs and brochures explaining the Education Excellence for Hispanic Americans organization that provides students early college preparedness information.

Ellen Krulewitch asked committee members to be aware of the flip-side of promoting education with these statistics, as more people might become against immigration.

Frances Vega explained that the Latino population will become half of the white population, making less than a third of the salary. This will result in a third-world country economy. The Latino population is the fastest growing and the youngest population. There will be many children growing up in the U.S that might not be able to sustain the increases in this country that are needed.

Frances Vega shared the Educational Attainment information that she had received from the NALEO Conference. The Mexican population (largest in the U.S) is currently only 45%. She also discussed a most recent study on Hispanic/Latino statistics completed by the Sagamore Institute on Policy Research.

Kathryn Lee encouraged everyone to have a worldly/global view of education. This idea was also discussed at the Sagamore Institute Study’s luncheon. She suggested that the U.S. connect with the government in Mexico in order to discuss those present educational issues.

Frances Vega explained how the Sagamore Institute on Policy Research brought up this idea; they compared studies with other states. The Sagamore Institute explained how the U.S. must give them the power to take care of themselves; permit their entry without deciding whether to live permanently in the U.S. or leave their families.

Laura Barrett promised to send electronic versions of the Sagamore Institute's study to all committee members.

Frances Vega said "If English is not the primary language, the students arrive in schools already grades behind; it is impossible to 'play catch up' by high school." Students cannot qualify for scholarships without satisfying GPA requirements.

Ellen Krulewitch explained that "catching students up" in high school is almost impossible; the administrators must "catch them up" in elementary school first.

Kathryn Lee assured committee members that all five areas of literacy and reading must begin at the pre-school levels. She explained a study completed with African-American students. A literacy-rich literacy program was provided and students were tested at the end of kindergarten-children were equal with their abilities. By third grade, children from low-income families who had once lacked literacy skills had significantly higher skills.

B. Academic Competitiveness Grant

Frances Vega mentioned the new Academic Competitiveness Grant and how most Latinos will not meet the requirements because of their citizenship status. She asked how many low-income parents already know that they must enroll their students into a pre-school program that will help prepare for their future.

Maria Dalhoumi asked if bilingual literacy was encouraged in the literacy-rich pre-school study that Kathryn Lee had discussed earlier.

Frances Vega explained how bilingual classes allow students to continue "their" language and learn in the language that they are accustomed to without falling behind. St. Augustine College in Chicago instructs through bilingual classes. These students are learn their native language while earning their degree.

Maria Dalhoumi explained that the Chicago curriculum was similar to that in Puerto Rico. Students would earn their degree in Spanish and still be able to satisfy their course requirements.

Ellen Krulewitch explained the benefits of the bilingual process; students would think of one language per/day. She explained how bilingual instructions might be better than Pull-Out.

Frances Vega explained the importance of encouraging a child's second language.

Laura Barrett discussed how individuals often discriminate against the language itself.

Frances Vega provided all committee members with the “ENLACE” program information: elementary school pathway activities, middle school pathways, high school pathways and the higher education pathway. She said that the NALEO Conference speakers focused on seamless transition with education. All seams must be caught early-on; NALEO provided information for educators. Frances Vega disseminated a lot of valuable education information to the Education Committee.

Frances Vega explained her own personal experiences in learning English. She reiterated how important it is that parents become directly involved with their child’s education. Frances Vega explained how Latino women supersede men with jobs; however, they must also overcome other obstacles involving brothers and fathers. Latinos are 40% less likely to enroll in college. She said that the U.S. must provide policies that will help grow the middle class. Frances Vega also provided additional copies of these statistics.

Kathryn Lee commented on the learning a language through body gestures. It was a successful technique.

C. Ivy Tech/Purdue Extension GED Preparation Programs

Laura Barrett explained how the Purdue Extension offers Mexican Diplomas through the Mexican Consulate. This program allows Mexican immigrants who did not finish their studies before moving to Indiana to earn their Mexican diplomas by taking classes through the Extension office. There are currently four sites that offer this program.

Frances Vega explained that the aforementioned program is called “Plazas Comunitarias.” It is a free program; the Mexican Consulate provides books, institution provides teachers/volunteers. Ivy Tech can accept these students once they reach a certain level. Ivy Tech also offers a similar GED program for ESL students, etc.

Ellen Krulewitch informed the committee that Debra Graves from Warren Township is a good resource for more information on the Plazas Comunitarias program.

Frances Vega explained how Debra Graves holds a Latino roundtable once a month. Debra Graves began teaching ESL and then took on the Plazas Comunitarias initiative. She has dedicated her life as a Latino community advocate; she delivers furniture, clothing, etc. to Latino families who are in need of assistance.

Adolfo Solis explained a similar case where a Mexican family was in need of assistance. CASA de Portland helped a family move into a new home; their current landlord planned to evict this family.

Kathryn Lee spoke about a Latino resource video provided by Ball State University.

Adolfo explained that this video includes soap operas explaining laws, etc. Latino needs.

Frances Vega asked Laura Barrett to speak about the Entérate proposal from Univisión.

Laura Barrett mentioned how Univisión is requesting for sponsorship (\$84,000) with a proposal that includes DVDs to be distributed throughout the State of Indiana; the main areas of distribution focus are the rural areas. These DVDs will provide information to the Indiana Hispanic/Latino communities about Indiana laws, education, resources and etc.

D. Gang Prevention After-School Programs

Laura Barrett spoke briefly about the first ICHLA Civil Right Committee meeting that was held on Monday, July 17, 2006. This Committee's main focus for 2006-2008 will be Hispanic/Latino gang-related issues. She mentioned that the Civil Right Committee plans to work closely with the ICHLA's Education Committee. Civil Rights Committee member, Byron Alston, had informed members that a professional, Latin American soccer player has an interest in creating a youth Hispanic/Latino soccer after-school program in Indianapolis. Byron Alston began the Save the Youth Center in Indianapolis, where he is the Director and a pastor; Byron was once a former gang member himself. Laura Barrett also discussed how Indianapolis Assistance Police Chief James Wyatt plans to create a similar soccer program involving Indianapolis Police officers and after-school youth.

Laura Barrett informed committee members about the committee summary (progress report) to be submitted to the Commission by September 2006. Committee member assignments were established from the first Committee meeting discussion in May 2006.

III. Next Steps

A. Discussion of Member Assignment Summaries/Recommendations

Laura Barrett asked each member to create bullet point of their ideas/suggestions based on their assignment research to be included in the Committee summary. She suggested that committee members correlate their recommendations into the committee discussions. Laura Barrett plans to compile all committee member bullet points into a Committee summary. Committee members were asked to submit their education bullet points via email to Laura Barrett or Amy Mendoza prior to the next Education Committee meeting.

Frances Vega asked that committee members narrow down their recommendations so they can be easily included into a committee summary.

Laura Barrett informed Committee members that the next Education Committee meeting will be tentatively scheduled for mid-September. (TBA)

Laura Barrett also informed committee members that Ryan Marques will postpone his extensive research discussion on Latino majors for the next committee meeting in September. She thanked all committee members for their attendance and participation.

IV. Adjournment

The ICHLA Education Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:10pm.